

NEWS



THUMBS UP ... Twenty postgraduate students in the Faculty of Law who had completed the newly introduced Postgraduate Diploma in Labour Law Practice at the George Campus were among the growing cohort of students who graduated from NMMU in George recently. Some members of the group, featured here with a proud Prof Adriaan van der Walt (NMMU Law Faculty, back, centre), included NMMU George Director of Operations, Martin Loubser (front, second from left), and senior representatives from local government and business from the Southern Cape and beyond. Environmental Law is also a growing focus at NMMU George.

Graduation celebrations

NMMU'S Graduation season commenced on a high note with a record number of students who completed their studies at the university's George Campus crossing the stage to receive their qualifications during two sessions on 30 and 31 March 2017.

This year students graduated with qualifications in five faculties – Science, Business and Economic Sciences; Education; Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology, as well as Law.

Bachelor of Commerce degrees, including the

BCom Accounting for Chartered Accountants degree, accounted for about a third of the qualifications awarded in the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences (BES), with the National Diplomas in Management, Marketing and Tourism Management also making up about a third.

The introduction of new qualifications in the past two years saw the first set of students this year qualifying with the Higher Certificate in Business Studies (BES), as well as the Postgraduate Diploma in Labour Law Practice.

The George Campus graduation, the first of

seventeen NMMU graduation sessions this season, was also characterised by a significant growth in the number of students who qualified with advanced qualifications, such as the Bachelor of Technology degree in the Agricultural Management, Forestry, Game Ranch Management, Nature Conservation and Wood Technology programmes.

Close to 20% of George Campus students who were awarded the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree passed Cum Laude. Several masters' degrees, most with distinction, were also awarded to George Campus graduates.



**Dear Colleagues,
Students, Alumni
and Friends,**

Nelson Mandela University will be launched with great excitement later this year. As we move towards this wonderful development, we have just experienced the great joy and hope that graduation brings.

We congratulate all our student and staff graduands on their fantastic achievements.

The opportune introduction of two new programmes that serves industry needs, saw the first set

of graduates qualifying with the Postgraduate Diploma in Labour Law Practice and Higher Certificate in Business Studies.

We especially congratulate our two new doctors – Dr Adele Potgieter in Business and Economic Sciences and Dr Anton Schmidt who has qualified in Science. We salute both colleagues and look forward to the benefits of their newly acquired expertise.

In addition, we warmly welcome Dr Schmidt, who succeeds Prof Jos Louw, in his capacity as new Director

of the School of Natural Resource Management. Furthermore, we congratulate SRU Head, Prof. Christo Fabricius on his recent appointment, as Visiting Professor, to the Universite Angers.

During a recent networking engagement, our new School of Business Director, Dr Randal Jonas, announced to the Southern Cape community that they have relocated from the City to the George Campus.

We are delighted with this development and look forward to

our work together in strengthening their presence and potential. We also welcome both NMMU's CANRAD as well as Arts and Culture department, who have extended their presence to the campus, and we look forward to supporting their respective mandates.

I wish you all a blessed and rewarding term as we together advance the Nelson Mandela University.

Thank you. Dankie. Enkosi.

Prof Quinton Johnson

From the desk of the Campus Principal

George PhD graduates - beaming with pride

DR Anton Schmidt and Dr Adele Potgieter are among a growing cohort of staff members from NMMU George Campus who have embraced the opportunity to further their studies at an advanced level.

Both were rewarded for their dedication and hard work when PhD-degrees in the field of Science, and Business Management respectively, were conferred upon them at the respective faculty graduation sessions in Port Elizabeth during April.

Dr Schmidt

Dr Schmidt's interest and grounding in nature conservation led him to research "*Bush clumps as indicators of thresholds of change in Arid Thicket mosaic biospheres*" – as his thesis is titled.

"In the literature, Arid Thicket transformation by domestic meso-herbivores is purported to follow a state-and-transition model, whereby the ecosystem is initially resilient to herbivory until some threshold is crossed, where-after there is a rapid shift



PASSION FOR LEARNING ... A proud Prof Quinton Johnson, Campus Principal (right) with the newest doctors at the NMMU George Campus – lecturers Anton Schmidt and Adele Potgieter.

to a new alternative stable state" says Dr Schmidt whose study represents a first attempt to verify this hypothesis by searching for evidence of "stable ecosystem states separated by structural, functional and degradation thresholds in Pruiim-Spekboomveld", a variation of Arid Thicket found in the southern Cape of South Africa.

"In general, my findings support the prediction in the literature that domestic meso-herbivore induced transformation of Arid Mosaic Thicket will follow a state-and-transition model", he concluded.

Dr Schmidt was recently assigned

the portfolio of Director of the School of Natural Resource Management (Faculty of Science) at NMMU George.

Dr Potgieter

The PhD (Business Management) study of Marketing Lecturer, Dr Adele Potgieter, focussed on branding variables, including personal branding, and corporate reputation.

It was carried out in order to explore the influence of employer branding, employee's personal branding and corporate branding on corporate reputation.

Her thesis titled "*The influence of selected branding variables on*

corporate reputation" argued that corporate reputation is one of the most valuable intangible assets of an organisation.

"Organisations need to ensure that they comprehend the elements in the establishment of a corporate identity and a corporate image, and how employees influence these constructs.

It became clear that an individual's associations, awareness and assessment of an organisation influence their direct and indirect experiences with an organisation resulting in the formulation of a corporate reputation" says Dr Potgieter who selected her study sample from the list of Top500 best managed companies in South Africa.

The research highlighted the importance of the relationship of an employee's personal brand in the creation, implementation and success of employer branding, corporate branding and corporate reputation. The results of the study also stress the importance of people management in an organisation, she said.

Boost for Economics

ECONOMICS lecturer at George Campus, Shoni Mphinyana's (right) self-confessed love for economics has motivated her to pursue her studies in this sphere, following various study routes from undergraduate level at NMMU to the point where she recently graduated with the degree MCom (Economics: Research) within NMMU's Business and Economic Sciences Faculty in Port Elizabeth.

Her captivating research with the topic titled, "*The Influence of Fiscal Policy on Economic Growth in South Africa*" examined the relationship between fiscal policy and economic growth in South Africa for the period 1994-2014 within the context of the endogenous growth theory.

"The findings of the study suggests that government investment expenditure has negative impact on growth, while government consumption expenditure has positive impact on growth.

Further, the findings of the study are that direct taxes have negative impact on the economy while indirect taxes have positive impact on economic growth".

This budding economist will be pursuing her PhD studies in Economics in July.



Veldfire graduates

THE popular Higher Certificate in Veldfire Management offered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's George Campus this year saw the second intake of students crossing the stage to receive this unique qualification.

Three of the twenty graduates received the qualification *cum laude*. The two top students in the programme - John Harris (above, right) who completed the qualification part-time over two years, and Alichia Kapp who opted for the full-time version of the programme over one year.





PROUD GRADUATES ... Prof Quinton Johnson, NMMU George Campus Principal (left) and the Dean of Science, Prof Azwinnndini Muronga (centre) with MSc graduates Kylie Schwegman, Richard Payn, Jonathan Roberts and Stefan Goets.

Master's degrees from two faculties (Education and Science), more than half of which were attained with distinction, offered another reason to celebrate the 2017 George Campus graduation.

The degree Master of Education, was awarded to Christina Auerbach *cum laude*, with her interesting dissertation titled, *THE POWER OF SOUND: REFLECTIONS ON AN INTERVENTION PROGRAMME TO DEVELOP ASPECTS OF MINDFULNESS* (Supervisor: Prof Alette Delpert).

Masters of Science

Stefan Goets was awarded the degree MSc (Nature Conservation). His dissertation was titled, *SEED ECOLOGY AND GROWTH COMPARISON OF NATIVE (VIRGILIA DIVARICATA) AND INVASIVE ALIEN (ACACIA MEARNsii AND A. MELANOXYLON) PLANTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATION*. (Supervisor: Dr

Masters of their subject

Tineke Kraaij, Co-supervisor: Dr Keith Little).

All three MSc (Forestry) graduates from George Campus were supervised by Dr Keith Little and were awarded their degrees *Cum Laude*. Graduate Richard Payn's dissertation was titled - *MANAGEMENT OF UROMYCLADIUM ACADIAE USING FUNGICIDES IN ACACIA MEARNsii PLANTATIONS, SOUTH AFRICA*; Jonathan Roberts' study focused on *THE USE OF HERBICIDES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EUCALYPTUS COPPICE IN SOUTH AFRICA*. Kylie Schwegman's dissertation is titled *INTEGRATION OF EUCALYPTUS COPPICE REGENERATION WITH MECHANICAL HARVESTING IN SOUTH AFRICA*

Etheresia Swart, whose studies (Master of Technology: Agriculture) were supervised by Prof

Ters Brand and Mrs Maryna Lehmann-Maritz, programme co-ordinator of the George Campus Agricultural Management programme, focussed on *EVALUATION OF NEAR INFRARED REFLECTANCE (NIR) SPECTROSCOPY TO DETERMINE THE NUTRIENT COMPOSITION OF RAW MATERIALS AND COMPOUND OSTRICH FEEDS*.

Another study with a Forestry focus earned Sikhumbuzo Nxulamo the MTech: Forestry degree. His dissertation is titled; *A FIBRE UTILISATION COMPARISON OF TWO HARVESTING SYSTEMS IN EUCALYPTUS GRANDIS IN KWA-ZULU NATAL FORESTRY REGION OF SOUTH AFRICA*. His supervisor and co-supervisor were industry stalwarts Dr Jaap Steenkamp and Mr Andrew McEwan respectively.



SUCCESS ... Prof Andrew Leitch, NMMU Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Engagement congratulates MEd graduate, Ms Christina Auerbach.



ACHIEVEMENT ... Corita Loubser, Co-ordinator at the Sustainability Research Unit (SRU) located at the NMMU George Campus graduated in Port Elizabeth recently after completing her Master studies in Business Administration with NMMU's Business School. She describes her journey as "a very good experience full of opportunities for personal growth and development". Her research project titled "Adolescent perceptions about leadership skills development to empower them as future leaders" was an exciting highlight of her studies.

ACADEMIC MERIT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ... More than eighty awards were recently presented to George Campus students who had excelled academically despite a challenging past academic year. Cllr Memory Booysen (right), Executive Mayor of the Eden District Municipality, joined the Campus Principal (left), Deans of Faculties and other stakeholders in congratulating the students during the prestigious annual Academic Merit Awards. It is aimed at acknowledging students who excelled academically (obtained a weighted average of at least 75% for the number of prescribed modules without failing or repeating any one of them) in the previous year of study. Lezaan Fourie received accolades for being the best fourth year student in the BEd (FET) programme, as well as the Dux Student for the duration of her studies (2013 – 2016), while Lisakhanya Ndovela was acknowledged as the Dux student, BTech Wood Technology Degree for 2016.



MELODIC TRIBUTE ... The NMMU George Campus Choir saluted graduates with song during the recent NMMU George graduation ceremony.



DELIGHTED ... Marketing Lecturer Dr Adele Potgieter with an elated group of George Campus Marketing graduates.



IN CELEBRATION ... Ndileka Mtshizana (Campus Librarian, left) and Richard Muller, programme co-ordinator for Wood Technology, with students who graduated with qualifications in this field.



PROUD GRADUATES ... NMMU George BCom Accounting graduates with their proud lecturers, Ewayne Le Roux (back, third from left), Peter Brodrick (front, third left) and Catherine Fourie (front, sixth left).

Industry accolades for Agri students

Excelling students from the NMMU George Campus Agricultural Management programme were acknowledged for their outstanding academic performance at an industry engagement arranged to complement NMMU's graduation season which commenced in George on 31 March. Twenty George Campus students were awarded the advanced degree - Bachelor of Technology: Agricultural Management – two with distinction; one student completed the degree, Master of Technology: Agriculture, while the National Diploma: Agricultural Management was awarded to eighteen students.



Resia Swart, Master of Technology: Agriculture graduate and recipient of the Cape Wools award for best Masters Dissertation (Agriculture) with Johan Jordaan from the NMMU George Agricultural Management Unit; Dr. Anton Schmidt, Director of the School for Natural Resource Management at NMMU George; Prof. Ters Brand, Research Associate at the NMMU George Agricultural Management Unit and Animal Scientist at Elsenburg; and Prof. Quinton Johnson, Campus Principal at NMMU George.



The award for Sustained Academic Performance over three years for N.Dip. Agricultural Management went to Jarred Easton. It was presented by Mr. Nico Jonck on behalf of the Outeniqua Agricultural Society



Matthew Payn was acknowledged as the Best Student overall in the National Diploma Agricultural Management (Dux student). The award was presented by Ms. Helen Serfontein of ABSA Agribusiness. Matthew also scooped the awards for the best student in Animal Production; Agricultural Management and Plant Production respectively over all three years of his studies. These awards were presented by Dr. Strydom on behalf of the Bonsmara Cattle Breeders' Association; Mr. Johan Myburgh of SSK and Mr. Stephan Gericke of Tikketai respectively.



Kevin Keyser received the Award for Sustained Academic Growth and Personal Self-development, presented by the NMMU George Agricultural Management Unit. He was congratulated by Dr. Anton Schmidt, Director of the School for Natural Resource Management at NMMU George (left) and Mr. Johan Jordaan, Agricultural Economist and lecturer in the NMMU George Agricultural Management Unit (right).

Town and Gown



The "Town and Gown" relationship between Nelson Mandela University and the City of George received a strong boost recently, just after our graduation celebrations, when specific projects focused on Training, Economic Development and Connectivity amongst others, were identified for implementation. Driving this important advancement is FLTR: Director Walter Hendricks (Community Services), Executive Mayor Melvin Naik, Campus Principal, Prof. Quinton Johnson and Municipal Manager, Trevor Botha.



GRADUATION JOY ... All the way from Sabie Nosipho Mthalande (left) and Phumlela Thanda (2nd from right) who graduated with the National Diploma: Wood Technology from NMMU George on 31 March, with their proud lecturers, Barry Muller (left) and Richard Muller (right) who is also the programme co-ordinator for this qualification. Nosipho, who is already employed by industry in Sabie, travelled all the way to Durban to join her family, from where they travelled together to George for the graduation ceremony on 31 March. Back in George she also collected her mountain bike (as she was part of the Madibaz MTB in 2016) to cycle the forests and mountains of Sabie.

IT graduates in user support boost for business

The second intake of students for the Higher Certificate in Information Technology in User Support Services introduced at the NMMU George Campus two years ago graduated on 30 March during the Certification Ceremony hosted on campus for Higher Certificate students across three faculties - Science (Higher Certificate in Veldfire Management); Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences (Higher Certificate in Business Studies) and Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and IT (EBEIT) (IT User Support Services).



SUCCESSFUL STUDENT ... Brian Bentlage, featured here with the Campus Principal, Prof Quinton Johnson, and Ms Sue Petratos from the EBEIT, was one of two IT User Support graduates who received their qualifications cum laude.

NMMU Business School now represented at George

NMMU George Campus is now also home to staff members of the Business School, who were previously located at the rented office space in York Street.

The move, as was explained by the Director of the Business School, Dr Randal Jonas, follows a "business decision to support a cost effective business model that is agile and

flexible enough to operate on a project to project basis".

Ms Natasha Thorne (from left) and Jozell Frans, who are both Programme Co-ordinators for the Business School can be located upstairs in Office 0048 at the Research Building adjacent to the Admin Building.

We warmly welcome both Ms

Thorne and Ms Frans who are no strangers to the NMMU community to the campus and look forward to continue working with them in developing the business talent of our region.

The e-mail details of the two colleagues remain the same as in the past - Natasha.Thorne@nmmu.ac.za and Jozell.Frans@nmmu.ac.za



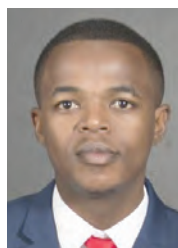
New staff

We warmly welcome Mr Asavela Ndondzo who has recently joined the ranks of the ICT George Team as ICT Technician, on a one year contract basis.

Mr Ndondzo, who completed his BTech (Information Technology – Networks) degree at NMMU in 2016 will bring much needed capacity to the George Campus ICT unit, enabling the university to continue rendering a high quality service to staff and students. "He is a definite asset to the George ICT Team, and started just in time to assist with the five-year computer replacement programme in the computer labs", says Ms Lynette Williams, Snr Business Analyst and acting head of the ICT Unit in George.

Mr Peter Brodrick CA(SA) whose love of teaching and development led him to a part-time lecture role with NMMU over the past two years was recently appointed as permanent lecturer for financial accounting at NMMU George Campus.

Peter, a Chartered Accountant (South Africa and Canada) by training has international experience with KPMG as a management consultant in Canada, as well as working in accounting advisory in the UK. He has operated his own consulting business and worked part-time with non-profit organisations in South Africa over the past four years. We warmly welcome Mr Brodrick and wish him well in his new capacity.



INTERNATIONALLY CONNECTED... NMMU is recognised as an important stakeholder in the sphere of sustainability research. Congratulations to Prof Christo Fabricius who heads up the NMMU Sustainability Research Unit (SRU), George Campus on his recent appointment as Visiting Professor in this field at the University of Angers in France.



NEW EDUCATORS ... Stakeholders from the education sector attended an engagement event with NMMU education graduates (BEd FET Degree) on the afternoon prior to graduation. The students and stakeholders, including NMMU staff, were captured at the George Campus with the Campus Principal, Prof Quinton Johnson (back, sixth from left) and the Executive Dean of Education, Dr Muki Moeng (next to him, right).

NMMU partner in national dialogue on land, human rights

THE issue of land reform in South Africa was discussed in depth at a symposium co-organised by the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, the Community Law Centre at the Kara Heritage Institute and NMMU George Campus.

Delegates who gathered in Pretoria for the dialogue on 19 April heard that a human rights approach to land redistribution, grounded in the effective implementation of Section 25 of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa, can still guarantee a life of dignity, equality and freedom for all South Africans.

This view, expressed by Prof Bongani Majola, Chair of the SA Human Rights Commission, was supported by Prof Mathole Motshekga, Adjunct Professor in NMMU's Public Law Department,

and Chair of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Justice and Correctional Services.

Convened for academics, students, civil society groups and state representatives by NMMU George Campus Principal, Prof Quinton Johnson, introduced the dialogue as a vital engagement about land for the restoration of dignity, reclamation of heritage and advancement of human rights.

Other key role-players in the dialogue included Adv Leks Makua from the Johannesburg Bar and Judge Johann van der Westhuizen, the Inspecting Judge of the Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services who chaired and facilitated the interactions of the symposium panel who took different and thought-provoking views on Section 25 of



PARTNERSHIP ... The Nelson Mandela University, Community Law Centre at Kara Heritage Institute and University of Pretoria hosted a Land, Heritage and Human Rights Symposium for leading academic, legal, business, government and community minds. Panellists FLTR included Prof. Mathole Motshekga (Parliamentary Portfolio Committee Justice Chair, Campus Principal, Prof. Quinton Johnson (Symposium Convenor), Prof. Bongani Majola (Chair: SA Human Rights Commission), Adv. Leks Makua (Johannesburg Bar), Werksmann Director Bulelwa Mabasa and Constitutional Court Judge (retired) and Inspector-General, Prof. Johan van der Westhuizen

the Constitution in addressing the question: "What legal reforms are needed for an effective and timely redistribution of land in South Africa?"

Delegates agreed on the urgency of addressing land reform issues and confirmed the need for a Land

and Economy CODESA to "radically address poverty, inequality and unemployment" in order to achieve the key objectives of restoration of human dignity, strengthening of the economy and advancement of our democracy.

New interns

THE university's representation at the George Campus has received a welcome boost with the appointment of two BCom students as interns for the Centre for the Advancement of Non-racialism and Democracy (CANRAD) and the Arts & Culture Department.

Balindi Hoho (above, right), who is completing her final year BCom (General Economics) degree, and Yanga Tsewu, a 3rd year BCom General Economics student will respectively extend the capacity of CANRAD and the Arts & Culture Department to spread their work to all NMMU campuses.

The two ladies can be located at the Student Rec Centre (Marula Commercial Area) where they share an office.

The landline number where they can be reached is 044 801 5177.

Welcome Balindi and Yanga!



Upcoming events

12&13 May

University Open Day at George Campus

23&24 May

CANRAD & Science Faculty Seminar Series

24 May

Launch of lecture series: Sustainable Futures Leadership

29&30 May

Name Change conversations, George Campus

2-6 July

IFSA symposium hosted at NMMU George Campus

10-14 July

NMMU Investec Grade 12 Accounting Winter School

21 July

Chancellor's Golf Day in George